

IN THE CLAIMS:

1. (Currently amended) A method for managing multiple user identities for a user of an electronic commerce (e-commerce) site, the method comprising:

defining the e-commerce site as a plurality of security domains; and

in response to a user's request to invoke an operation of the e-commerce site:

identifying a type of user identity being used by the user, wherein the user identity is at least one of a guest identity, a generic identity, or a registered identity;

determining if the type of user identity is appropriate to invoke the operation;

responsive to the type of user identity being appropriate to invoke the operation, determining a security domain of the plurality of security domains to which the operation relates;

selecting a session from a plurality of sessions persisted for the user based on the determined security domain; and

reusing the selected session for the user automatically in accordance with the determined security domain, the selected session being associated with a user identity and a role, the user identity and the role together indicating privileges for invoking operations of the e-commerce site in the determined security domain.

2. (Previously presented) The method of claim 1 comprising invoking the requested operation with the user identity and the role of the selected session.

3. (Previously presented) The method of claim 2 wherein the selected session comprises information indicating at least one of: the user preference's for invoking operations at the e-commerce site; the user's preferences for invoking operations at least for the determined security domain; and a security signature for authenticating the selected session information.

4. (Previously presented) The method of claim 1 comprising evaluating the requested operation to determine an operation type and wherein the step of reusing is performed in accordance with the operation type.
5. (Canceled)
6. (Previously presented) The method of claim 4 wherein the user identity is associated with an identity type for permitting the invocation of operations; wherein the method comprises receiving the user's request in association with the plurality of sessions persisted for the user and retrieving the user identity for the determined security domain from the plurality of sessions; and wherein the step of reusing is performed in response to the identity type of the retrieved user identity.
7. (Previously presented) The method of claim 1 wherein the step of selecting comprises providing one or more cookies defining the selected session to the user for associating with a subsequent request.
8. (Previously presented) The method of claim 7 wherein the cookies comprise an authentication cookie and a session cookie; and wherein the method comprises authenticating the user's request.
9. (Previously presented) The method of claim 1 comprising:
defining each of the plurality of security domains as a hierarchy of organizations and assets owned by the organizations; and
wherein the step of determining the security domain of the plurality of security domains to which the operation relates comprises evaluating the user's request in accordance with the hierarchy.
- 10-27. (Canceled)

28. (New) The method of claim 1, further comprising:
responsive to the type of user identity being an inappropriate type of user identity
to invoke the operation,
switching the user to the appropriate type of user identity to invoke the operation.
29. (New) The method of claim 28, further comprising:
responsive to the user ending an operation of the e-commerce site, switching the
user back to the inappropriate type of user identity.